

Impossible Voices: Archaic Poetics and Archaic Epigram

CHS Fellows Symposium
April 30, 2011
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1. *CEG* 344
(ca. 600-550? BCE base for two vessels, near Delphi)

τάσδε γ' Ἀθαναία δραφεὸς Φαφ' ἐάριστος ἔθεκε
ἡέραι τε, ἡος καὶ κ|ἔνος ἔχοι κλέφρος ἄπιθτον αἰφεί.

Phaw(?e)aristos placed these vessels for Athena and Hera, so that he too might have unquenchable *kleos* always. (Trans., Day)

2. *CEG* 286, ca. 490-480? BCE
(plinth for statuette of ?Athena, Acropolis, Athens)

πᾶσιν ἴσ' ἀνθρώποι | ς ἠυποκ | ρίνομαι ἡόστις ἐ[ρ | ο]τᾶι |
ἡός μ' ἀνέθεκ' ἀνδ | ρῶν· Ἀντι | φάνες δεκάτεν.'

I perform an identical answer to all people, whoever asks who of men set me up: 'Antiphanes (did) as a tithe.' (Trans. Day)

3. *CEG* 13, ca. 575-550? BCE
(base of a stele, Athens)

[εἴτε ἀστό]ς τις ἀνερ εἴτε χσένος | ἄλοθεν ἐλθὼν :
Τέτιχον οἰκτίρα | ς ἀνδρ' ἀγαθὸν παρίτο, :
ἐν πολέμοι | φθίμενον, νεαρὰν ἡέβεν ὀλέσαν | τα. :
ταῦτ' ἀποδυράμενοι νέσθε ἐπ' | ἰ πρᾶγμ' ἀγαθόν.

Let each man, whether a citizen or foreigner coming from elsewhere, pass on only after pitying Tettichos, a good man, who perished in war and lost his fresh youthfulness. Once you have lamented this, move on to a good deed. (Trans. Day)

4. *CEG* 28, ca. 540-530? BCE
(base of a stele, Athens)

ἀνθροπε ἡόστειχε[ι]ς : καθ' ὁδὸ | ν : φρασίν : ἄλα μενοιῶν, :
στῆθι | καὶ οἴκτιρον : σῆμα Θράσσονος : ἰδὼν

You there, who move along the road with mind intent on other matters, halt and pity, having looked on the marker of Thrason. (Trans. Day)

5.a *CEG* 143, ca. 625-600? BCE
(large, circular stone monument, Corcyra)

ἠυιοῦ Τλασίαφο Μενεκράτεος τόδε σᾶμα :
Οἰανθέος γενεάν, τόδε δ' αὐτοῖ δᾶμος ἐποίηι. :
ἔς γὰρ πρόξενφος δάμου φίλος· ἀλλ' ἐνὶ πόντοι :
ἔλετο, δαμόσιον δὲ καφὸν ῥο[(-) - - -]. :
Πραξιμένες δ' αὐτοῖ γ[αία]ς ἀπο πατριδος ἐνθὼν :
σὺν δάμ[ο]ι τόδε σᾶμα κασιγνέτοιο πονέθε. :

Of the son of Tlasias, Menecrates, this is the marker, / Oeanthian by race, and this the *demos* made for him. / For he was the representative of the *demos*, dear to them: but at sea / he perished, and the disaster for the *demos* [...]. / And Praximenes coming for him from their native land / with the *demos* fashioned this marker of his brother. (Trans. Bowie)

5.b *CEG* 145, ca. 600? BCE
(stele, Corcyra)

σᾶμα τόδε Ἀρνιαδά· χαροπὸς τόνδ' ὄλε | σεν Ἄρες
βαρνάμενον παρὰ ναυσ | ἰν ἐπ' Ἀραθθοιο ρηοφαῖσι,
πολλὸ | ν ἀριστεύ<φ>οντα κατὰ στονόμεσαν ἀφυτάν.

This is the marker of Arniadas. This man fierce-eyed Ares destroyed / battling by the ships beside the streams of the Aratthos / achieving great excellence amid the battle-roar that brings mourning. (Trans. Bowie)

5c. *CEG* 146, ca. 575-550? BCE
(capital, Corcyra)

στάλα Ξενφάρεος τοῦ Μηείξιός εἰμ' ἐπὶ τύ | μοι.

I am the *stele* of Xenvares, son of Meixis, on his tomb.

6. Homer, *Il.* 2.484-493

ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι:
ἡμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε πάρεστε τε ἴστε τε πάντα, 485
ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν·
οἵ τινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν·
πληθὺν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω,
οὐδ' εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶεν,
φωνῆ δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δὲ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη, 490
εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
θυγατέρες μνησαίαθ' ὄσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον·
ἀρχοὺς αὐτῶν νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας.

Tell me now, ye Muses that have dwellings on Olympus— [485]
for ye are goddesses and are at hand and know all things,
whereas we hear but a rumour and know not anything—who
were the captains of the Danaans and their lords. But the
common folk I could not tell nor name, nay, not though ten
tongues were mine and ten mouths [490] and a voice
unwearying, and though the heart within me were of bronze, did
not the Muses of Olympus, daughters of Zeus that beareth the
aegis, call to my mind all them that came beneath Ilios. Now will
I tell the captains of the ships and the ships in their order. (Text
and trans. from Perseus)